

# The argumentative written skills through the use of the pedagogical mediation of Facebook as an educational network. A reflection on the state of art\*

GUILLERMO AUGUSTO RODRÍGUEZ SÁNCHEZ\*\*

JAIME ANDRÉS TORRES ORTIZ\*\*\*

Traducción: María Del Pilar Gutiérrez, Departamento de Idiomas - Universidad de Manizales

## Abstract

The present report is a review of the state of the art relating to the researches that have been conducted in the last three years, about the perspectives in written argumentation procedures through the pedagogical use of Facebook as an educational network.

Some comments and considerations have been drawn with regard to the use of the social networks in the school education, having as a starting point the students of "Rural Technical Education Institution". The current social network is the only one used at the secondary school level. On that social network the students interact sharing personal and social experiences that keep up a continuous connectivity and a recurrent presence of it. Given these conditions it is possible to suggest that Facebook might be maximized as an educational tool toward the strengthening of the written argumentative skills, characterized by the exchange of languages, enrichment of views and the diversification the discussions as well as the language skills.

**Keywords:** Argumentative Skills, Facebook, Pedagogical tool

## Introduction

Before starting, it is necessary to highlight some of the ideas that motivated Marck Zuckerberg to create Facebook and turn it into one of the most popular Internet websites. According

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\* Reflection article

\*\* Student Master of Education. Pedagogical and Technological University of Colombia. Email: guillermo.rodriguez@uptc.edu.co.

\*\*\* Doctor of Education Sciences. Pedagogical and Technological University of Colombia. Email: Jaime.torres@uptc.edu.co

to Spadaro (2009), this platform started being small and with only a few years in the network, its growth became enormous; He designed it while studying at Harvard University in early 2004, and among its main reasons for creating it, was the way to bring the university social experience to the Internet, that is, something that could help university students connect with each other.

This produced that the fraternities and brotherhoods typical of American schools, had at hand a powerful tool, where shared information allowed everyone to interact with each other. Zuckerberg wanted to create an environment in which they could send messages, share images, look at photos of other people, share videos and links and have ongoing conversations with others. In this way, people could keep in touch with everyone regardless of their physical locations

Now, moving to the current context, it is practical to analyze how the incorporation, use and applicability of Information Technologies and ICT Communication, have occupied an important place in the educational areas, for this it becomes valid then to scrutinize how the use of the tools that these offer, can eventually contribute to the strengthening of the written argumentation of the students of the secondary basic cycle.

From this perspective is analyzed in this article, the written argumentation processes that arise from the use of Facebook as an educational network, describe the forms of habitual communication that students use through the social network, comparing also the processes of interaction and social acceptance in which they are involved, to finally determine how young people use some of the resources offered by the popular platform.

In the contacts made with the students in master classes, it is possible to identify the growing disinterest and demotivation by the classic sessions of blocks of 120 minutes, in which the relevant characteristic remains the replica of the behavioral model, where the tutor performs "Dictates" or develops exercises with their backs to their students, and the imposition of topics with little participation of young people. In short, enough certainties to investigate the use of the social network as a promoter of encounters in educational processes mid-term of their use.

Then, it is intended that experiences such as those associated with the geographical field (the location of the municipality), the cultural field (municipal events) or the productive field (agricultural production, or the wealth of fauna and flora) serve as references to raise new communicative scenarios from where young people appropriate their environment and their environment.

Therefore, the use of a significant means of technological communication such as Facebook, could place experiences of an educational nature as learning processes and in the process become a strategy for students to increase the analytical and proactive levels of their arguments, allowing them Thus, reasoning of plausible quality that leads to a significant written production and that somehow allows to understand, how the educational realities in which the students are immersed, manage to give a reverse to the same habit of learning in the classroom, but with a integral sense of the virtual and real.

As mentioned by Márquez (2010), true learning occurs when students are able to elaborate and communicate their own discourse based on new knowledge and these are developed

from their own experiences and observations, which undoubtedly allows them to identify the arguments for or against a given position and in turn will enable them to discuss and express their own knowledge of the world of life and the environment that surrounds it.

## Referential framework

A reflective look at the argumentative skills written through the use of pedagogical mediation Facebook as an educational network, will allow us to analyze the current approaches that education uses through the use and incorporation of Information and Communication Technologies, positively impacting the processes education through their apprehension in institutional curricula. Its implementation in the academic field provides a response to the different requirements that students have in the way they usually receive information in the classroom.

The limitations in written argumentation exercises are easily detectable in students of all levels, the main drawbacks when arguing can be identified when personal opinions are requested so that through a written creation, the individual supports or affirms about a topic determined, which is usually mediated by factors such as poor analytical production, where the scriptural work is done simply to meet a requirement that results in obtaining a valuation mark.

It becomes pertinent then, to investigate what are the motivations that can be generated by being part of a social network without the pressures described above, making visible the different forms of language that can be generated by the contents loaded on the network, or better understood, what kinds of written comments are embodied, even if these are small or scarce in appreciations.

Likewise; what meaning can be translated by other communicative variables used in the “walls” such as the shared illustrations, the photographs of the social nucleus and the popular “emojicons” whose translation is a mixture of emotions and icons and that inevitably sooner rather than later, will replace a good part of the written language, all of which variables can be derived in situations such as the indifference, acceptance or response of the receiver.

With the above it is necessary to analyze what activities Facebook can offer as an educational network. In order to do this, different traces are made in the databases that inquire about the last three years, allowing us to identify the way in which ideas are proposed and questioned. What was previously done face to face through visual contact, is now done through a screen and a platform in which there are contacts, which in a mixture of synchronous and asynchronous information, can establish dialogues directly, leaving messages in an open forum that everyone knows as a wall, in which users can write what they want so that anyone can also read it.

According to Gómez (2014), systems such as Facebook were developed with that goal in mind and it is precisely through this new communicative paradigm that it becomes important to establish the new roles that teaching brings, and to determine how it is possible to strengthen written language through of the argumentative skills expressed in Facebook.

In short, technological platforms can be as functional as you want, which means that education professionals assimilate the constant changes brought by new technologies, in order to take up the spaces that were already conquered by young people and see how they can be used in an academic and educational environment, at least as regards the moment and the now, because the uncertainty of tomorrow and the consequent technological avalanche will surely make something better or unexpected arise, and then teachers will also have to adapt to these new processes.

## The use of Facebook as a pedagogical mediation

For a couple of decades the term “pedagogical mediation” has been the source of diverse interpretations according to Contreras (1995), it represents more than a change of name, a change of paradigm, it being indispensable to consider the teaching task in a completely different way. How it is considered from the approaches of the traditional school and the active school. The pedagogical mediation understood in the terms of the knowledge construction approach consists of the task of accompanying and promoting the learning of the students according to their needs.

For this, an approach to the state of the art having as support the use of the pedagogical mediation Facebook, will facilitate to endorse the true potential of this network in the educational field; that with something more than 1,000 million users across the planet, it has practically become a virtual nation.

In the first instance, Chiecher’s proposal (2014), “A virtual environment, two experiences. Group academic tasks and socialization of emotions on Facebook “emphasizes the incidence of Facebook in an educational context and its assimilation for academic purposes, in this research the emotional expression is transformed through virtual and social networks, which means that there are expert students in socializing their perception about the use of Facebook for educational purposes, developing diversity and dynamism, because it inherently implies emotional expression.

According to Chiecher (2014), the researchers proposed that Facebook be the meeting place for previously created working groups and in turn serve for the solution of a specific academic task within the framework of a subject, but at the end of the analysis, the experience was transformed into the synthesis of another, which led to a proposal in which the social network became a space for meeting and exchange of experiences, feelings and emotions among young people, determining that the initial pedagogical mediation gave way to relationships more consistent and inclusive.

Following Chiecher (2014), the experience also revealed several factors, present in the group of students who participated in the observation. These, ignored in a large percentage the potential and resources that the social network could offer and that, consequently, through these analyzes, it was pertinent to design and implement experiences that involved the use of the social network for entirely educational and academic purposes.

Chiecher (2014), concludes that those students who effectively used the social network for educational purposes, whether for consultations, having contact with their tutors or colleagues or even experts immersed in navigation, did so by initiative and self-will; since the teachers themselves did not receive proposals that implied the use of the social network. Rather, on the contrary, they clearly showed in several situations, a manifest distrust of the networks or websites used by the students, since they identified them as a harmful element for the normal development of their traditional teaching.

According to Solano et al. (2013), Chiecher (2014), If social networks have a strong presence in everyday life, it is not appropriate to leave them outside the educational structure. On the contrary, we must think about its inclusion in several spheres of learning; for the digital natives that today populate the classrooms, life takes place in the Facebook universe and it is through this valuable resource that the student can be understood and understood in order to motivate and guide him through the ways in which he has been traveling for some time.

Complementary to what was proposed by Chiecher (2014), Gómez and López (2010), they expose the existence of expert students in socializing information through Facebook. However, there are not many who know how to recognize (and use) the potential that lies behind each application. Consequently, it is feasible to design and implement experiences that involve the use of the social network for academic and / or educational purposes where pedagogical mediation contributes significantly to the teaching task.

In the same sense Miranda (2013), expressly mentions the continued use of virtual social networks (in particular Facebook), to the extent that such networks are part of daily life. This allows us to understand that education without them is a way of understanding education far from reality, and in this framework, several experiences that took advantage, are presented of the Facebook environment in educational contexts, strengthening and increasing the autonomy and personal extracurricular interest .

According to Miranda (2013), it is important to highlight that the insufficiencies on the part of the students in the handling of the ITCs, can be overcome through the development of competences in the search of information through them and, proposes that the orientation of students in the use of the social network Facebook is through teaching activities as a pedagogical mediation, allows to take advantage of the novelty of the medium to ensure that students obtain adequate information and improve the expression of their ideas.

According to Carrio (2007), the proliferation of participatory and collaborative technologies such as social networks, play a role rather than protagonist in young people, being precisely this perception, where cannot be ignored an impact on everyday life, nevertheless it is still insufficient the work done by teachers to take advantage of the many advantages that social networks have in strengthening their students as pedagogical mediation, both in the use of new technologies, in obtaining information and expressing their ideas, and in the stimulation of their study activities and in the facilitation towards the development of communicative competences.

Complementing the previous idea, any educational practice can be taken to the field of pedagogical mediation, however it is necessary to keep in mind each one of the means and

materials used to accompany and promote the learning of the students, thus contributing to their integral formation and, to a quality education. This depends in large part on the methodological conceptions that the teacher has and develops in his practice.

In the same vein, Valenzuela (2013), exposes the importance of connectivity in everyday life and how the search for really useful information can create an interesting interaction between students and teachers, knowing in advance that the knowledge of teachers are not precisely the more suitable. For this, the possibility of using the most popular social networks for purely educational purposes is opened, provided that the seriousness and veracity of the published information and the responsibility of the discloser are taken into account.

The connectivity in the daily life is in fact a practice that seeks to share knowledge, and emotions surpassing traditionalist perspectives; therefore, access to information today is changing teaching habits, and therefore it is feasible to open a healthy debate about how educational social networks not only promote autonomy but also collaborative work at school as an educational activity that improves understanding.

According to Valenzuela (2013), Madariaga (2012), the networks in the school are pedagogical mediations that are based on learning methodologies and enhance the union between colleagues, generating also a sense of belonging and allowing a more natural and friendly way a communication between the educating and the counselor, who leads in an assertive way to the socialization of activities or consultation of topics, reminders to deliver work, dates of exams and many other possibilities, providing in passing a positive sense of autonomy and collaborative spirit among all, just with the end that follows the pedagogical mediation in the way in which the teacher develops his practice and emphasizing his learning methodology.

To achieve a better understanding of the nature of Facebook and how its pedagogical mediation can be really useful, Valenzuela (2013), González (2011), makes precision on the concept of WEB 2.0 that in its early beginnings towards the nineties, it only allowed that the anxious users who surfed through the network, could only have access to certain information, which in turn this took or passed according to their learning interests.

In the current context, the interaction between users became the main protagonist, because in it all produce, socialize, and exchange information, promoting the emergence of new trends and concepts as dissimilar as the blog or the podcast, which are the massification of other events of high impact and traffic such as the publication of all types of images and photographic illustrations called Web 3.0 and Web 4.0 respectively.

The above approaches allow us to understand the use of the elements that bring an appropriate pedagogical mediation through the use of Facebook, which has elements such as obtaining information quickly, communication with hundreds of people at a time, the practice of skills through the innumerable applications of smartphones as something natural and automatic. The integration of social networks in everyday education, with its huge and undeniable power of influence and attraction to the youngest, is an opportunity to create new spaces for socialization and learning at the hands of social networks and informational and communicative tools, incidentally contributes to strengthen the written and argumentative skills of the learners.

## Argumentative written skills in Facebook

In the different investigations it is possible to identify the argumentative from a constructive and reflexive process, proposing the need of a guided instruction that exposes diverse written aspects of the writing.

Bolívar et al. (2015), Van et al. (2002), argue argumentation as an intellectual and social activity focused on defending or refuting a point of view, with the purpose of reaching an agreement on ideas. The argument focuses on the interactions that occur between two or more people through discussions, or when a reasoning is exposed.

Following Bolívar et al. (2015), the argumentative difficulties that Middle School students present to assume points of view and deploy arguments to controversial situations, settle conflicts and intervene in academic and social spaces that require them to resort to the use of argumentative skills, and show low analytical levels, as the progress and the completion. These do not go beyond the fulfillment of homework and school work and that with exceptional cases, they arise as a response to one's own discernment and to the intellectual capacity of the individual.

In the same way Bolívar, et al. (2015), affirm that arguing in the school through a good practice of written ability, is an exercise that implies the promotion of competences in children and young people from the discussion of their daily experiences, in addition to the mediation of the teacher, so that they assume this work in a deliberate and autonomous way, even in learning scenarios in the digital world, which seem to be mechanical and distant in emphatic and reciprocal discussions.

According to Jiménez and Erduran, (2007) argumentation becomes relevant in education, not only because it is a competency that must be taught, but also because it is a way to encourage the learning of disciplinary areas such as science, philosophy, mathematics and other fields of knowledge. Therefore, the promotion and development of both written and oral argumentative competences do not translate into requirements for doing science, but in indispensable skills for critical thinking, the acquisition of knowledge and the ability of students to participate in a adequate in making complex decisions

The foregoing is integrated to what was stated by Bolívar, et al. (2015), in the educational scenarios associated with the use of ICT and in particular Web 2.0 applications to stimulate the exercise of argumentation as spaces for citizen participation, the understanding of the argumentative reflection that is present is particularly relevant. in the discourses that young people share in these virtual spaces, and encourages the school to find the best alternatives to take advantage of the tools provided by these technologies in such a way that it is possible to strengthen the argumentative processes of the students.

In the same sense Fernández and Díaz (2016), propose an educational proposal through the development of "Argumentative skills in the production of the school essay" in this study an educational design is presented where an instructional model is proposed to promote argumentative skills in students High school, through the development of a school essay

that allows integrating the external structure of the essay, the point of view, the arguments, counter-arguments and refutations.

Following Fernández and Díaz (2016), there are situations that today more than ever, evidence the educational use of social networks in school at all levels and even more if it is to strengthen elements as significant as those that make up the argumentative skills written, being evident in children and adolescents who can better integrate these skills in many aspects of their lives, because with their correct apprehension, it is not only possible -and also pertinent- to strengthen the teacher-student relationship, but also allowing this last, to confront each other in a frank and open manner, generating spaces of mutual trust.

According to Rodríguez (2007), in the school environment, teachers often request the elaboration of essays with the conviction that this textual genre provides a way to demonstrate what students have learned about the main concepts or knowledge of type factual. However, it is usually approached more in its expository aspect, as a means of testing to measure knowledge of a topic, in a repetitive way, and not as an instrument to express opinions, passing to the background its argumentative or reflexive quality.

In the same sense Larrain, et al. (2014), the ability to argue is fundamental in social insertion, however, the evidence suggests that school systems show little capacity to promote the development of these skills. In part, this is due to the difficulty of measuring it and recognizing its progress. With respect to the students' performance, most of them are able to elaborate opinions and simple arguments, but they are not able to understand counter-arguments.

Faced with this panorama, the insertion of the social network Facebook, used by most students as a site used to establish contact and communication with family, friends and acquaintances, can help in the academic field so that some of their tools unknown by most cybernauts, eventually promote collaborative work, feeding argumentative-type discussions, such as, for example, in the sharing of multimedia materials such as YouTube tutorials, which have to do with subjects related to the subject that is being developed, and the orientation and gradual accompaniment of the teacher.

Álvarez and López (2013), emphasize the development of argumentative capacity based on the increase of feedback understood as the capacity of an issuer to gather reactions from the recipients and modify their message. According to what was collected between the students and the teacher, by means of interventions that take place in the space known as "wall", which is the central element on which Facebook users relate and whose specific purpose consists on extracting information from students about their doubts, concerns, criticisms or evaluations. With this information, the tutor will eventually be able to assess the situation of the students within their learning process and, based on this, plan a pedagogical mediation in accordance with their interests.

Following Álvarez & López (2013), before starting the training activity with Facebook, it should be made clear that although this social network may be related to non-educational contexts, it can be used for learning purposes, The fact that most students use it in their daily lives to relate to their friends and family does not mean that they develop all the argumentative skills necessary in learning.

Because of the above, if a teacher thinks that students being tagged as digital natives can export their knowledge of Facebook for formal uses, surely all activity would fail, because this does not happen by the mere fact of being added as friends, but rather it is the product of the application of different strategies of the teacher, which in turn, generate the interventions of students.

To achieve a favorable interaction, observation and participation can eventually determine that students interact more frequently when they can express their doubts, problems and interests. In this sense, Álvarez and López (2013), Prensky (2001), point out that technological tools have changed the structures of the brain, generating hypertexts in the minds of new students, which means that once the teacher has gathered the information, they analyze and plan their strategies with the help of feedback, identifying at the same time that students are able to present their points of view clearly and practically through written argumentative skills.

According to Álvarez and López (2013), García and Álvarez (2010), in training environments, it is sometimes possible to observe a continuum that goes from a highly controlled system, centered on the teacher, to a system where teachers and students share the responsibility of the organization and the fulfillment of the tasks relying on own actions of the feedback. In this way, Facebook can allow the teacher to increase the activity and the involvement of the students in their classroom, since these are located in a more familiar space for interaction; It could be affirmed then, that if the use of social networks is stimulated in formal learning, students would take advantage of the opportunity to interact and participate by taking an open and collaborative attitude, as well as a deeper involvement than they do only by taking masterful classes.

According to Williams (2009), Web 3.0 exceeds Web 2.0 in that it is an open communicational environment that decentralizes authority and allows information to be shared or reused among a group of users connected to the network. In this space, people learn to the extent that they contribute to their productions or contribute to collective knowledge. The results show that arguing in school is an exercise that goes beyond the use of information, which implies the promotion of skills in children and young people from the discussion of their daily experiences, in addition to the mediation of the teacher, so that they assume in a deliberate and autonomous way, this work is provoked in learning scenarios in the digital world.

Castro and Gonzalez-Palta (2016), affirm that the use of Facebook for the development of critical thinking focuses on the dissemination of central ideas and the arguments presented by the participants, recognizing among other variables, the relevant relationships that are generated in the interaction between the subjects and the deductions that on this type of thought are developed. This gives sufficient elements of judgment to evaluate one's own thinking and that of others, in terms of the concepts that facilitate the ability to formulate and justify articulated points of view, and that are mediated by the ability to argue in a written way.

Most of the authors previously exposed, indicate that with the use of social networks and in particular Facebook, autonomy in learning and consequently written argumentative skills would be encouraged. Especially when producing texts based on the use of images, and pictorial representations, what according to Monsalve (2012), are elements that have redefined

the concept of writing and literacy. The preeminence of the image in the digital world and other ways of communicating, different from the alphabetic code, pose the need to acquire visual alphabetic skills to access the new communication environments.

According to Monsalve (2012), the emergence of electronic devices that allow the presentation of information in multiple ways, is leading to redesign the way people recognize and access information. The preponderance of the image in an entirely digital world, outlines the need to acquire argumentative skills to access new communication challenges. The continuous incidence of technology redefines the informative characteristic of the data, information that is not necessarily projected in a written way, but rather interpretive, with new codes and situations that express a language, so to speak, just like words.

In conclusion, the written argumentative skills that can be developed through the Facebook platform, allow us to understand that students can learn from the resources it offers, by manipulating the information there expressed, displaying not only cognitive abilities, such as reasoning, synthesis, and decision-making, which make it possible for them to develop skills and aptitudes such as socialization, citizen participation or teamwork, and the production of sustained opinions that may well characterize active participation.

## Facebook as an educational network

According to Spadaro (2009), the functionality of Facebook as an educational network in the words of its creator Mark Zuckerberg, consists of designing a purely social space in which students can exchange fluent communication and share content easily through the Internet. Its innovation and success lies in the overcrowding, its easy access, rapid appropriation of its use, functionality and, its adaptive technological design capacity.

According to Torres (2016), a synthesized analysis of the Facebook platform as an educational network, will make it possible to demonstrate the benefits of immersing oneself in this world of unlimited proportions and growing by leaps and bounds, which has led to situations that were previously unthinkable, therefore, pedagogical practices and models should help to reflect on the purpose of introducing changes in everyday methods, adapting and integrating into teaching and learning processes. The immersion in a universe opposed to the texts and notebooks seeks to promote research and bring to reality those aspects that can contribute to improving the educational work.

Barajas and Álvarez (2013), indicate that through Facebook communities of practice are formed, which facilitate the transmission of knowledge, managing to conquer distances and their durability over time. Similarly, Garcia (2008), indicates that previous studies demonstrate the importance of social networks, including Facebook, as teaching tools through which educators can be part of a process of interactive communication with youth to address issues such as digital citizenship and behavior in the network.

Estebanell (2002), emphasizes elements such as interactivity and interaction, interactivity describes the communication relationship between a user / actor and a system

(computer, video or other). The degree of interactivity of the product is defined by the existence of resources that allow the user to establish a participative-communicative action process with the materials. In the case of Facebook, currently, plays an important role in the lives of millions of students, becoming a way to channel the enthusiasm of students for websites like this.

According to Álvarez & López (2013), interactivity from collaborative learning examines the use of the popular social network from this type of learning, which allows to extract some observations and suggestions regarding its use in university education. For this, it was initially important to specify a differentiation regarding the meaning of the expressions “digital natives” and “digital immigrants” whose actors are those who give meaning to the very habit of “navigating”, interacting, investigating and constructing knowledge.

The digital natives according to Piscitelli (2008), are all those young adolescents who travel in the present, and who were born in the digital era and integrate ICT into their daily lives. Digital immigrants are the consumers and next producers of almost everything that exists (and will exist) and were born before the appearance of ICT.

According to Piscitelli (2008), today most teenagers own a mobile phone, this relatively new change in the way they connect to the Internet, offers an unparalleled opportunity to educators, so that through the use instant access, it is possible to learn through websites, groups and Facebook chats moderated by a counselor who guides and motivates the teaching of their students outside the classroom.

The students of today have different expectations and learning styles than those of previous generations. The use of social and mobile technologies gives adolescents an unprecedented opportunity to use tools such as Facebook to create learning communities or personal learning networks (Personal Learning Network). When the curriculum allows self-directed online learning, students can learn more than what is taught in school, because they are able to extract meanings for themselves beyond the teacher’s purpose.

According to Álvarez and López (2013), personal learning networks are the characterization of the teacher as a digital immigrant, and it implies the incorporation of ICT in their teaching process, which leads to adopt a guiding role in the student’s learning process, believing in him and his capacity for creativity, and helping him to understand. In the case of Facebook, although it has been qualified as a tool for informal learning, it has begun to be used in formal experiences, which has revealed great and not a few potentialities.

## Conclusions

The way of writing on Facebook has become a model of language that is approaching for purposes of advocacy towards the educational field; which means, that is permeating the writing through the network, impacting on the presentation of the scriptural production of young people, which becomes more palpable in the notes of their notebooks or the papers with messages that still exist in an educational environment.

The writing of students continues to change, however these forms of writing cannot be considered simply grammatical practices, but in them emerge other sociolinguistic elements that say much of how they feel and are conceived as subjects of the world of life.

The power of Facebook is unpredictable and striking and given its great convening power, in which not only aspects such as political and social causes impact contemporary society, they make it a contradiction that is not considered as a whole key reference for education, which is ironic, because it was created in an academic environment by students and academics. Therefore, it becomes a tool that allows us to take advantage of its educational uses and experiences in different areas of study.

The main objective of the use of Facebook, is that the student is a co-producer of knowledge with their colleagues and teachers, while using the potential offered by ICT. We cannot wait for the state policies or the contents of the curricula through basic learning rights to determine whether or not it is significant in the teaching of each individual. Finally, it should be considered that the role of the modern teacher aims to become a guide and moderator of the group, which is fully compatible with Facebook, where the contents can be set in real time and learners can be placing comments freely and when the the counselor considers it pertinent, it can also motivate them to contribute again on the study topics and enhance the learning through their mobile devices, given the immediacy of the information.

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